

EFFUTU ASAFO: ITS ORGANIZATION AND MUSIC

by

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1. Introduction

*Asafo*¹ is an ancient warrior organization that exists in all Akan societies of Ghana. When *asafo* came into existence can only be speculated on since there are no records to consult. One thing that is certain about it is the reason for its existence: it started as a force to initiate or combat aggression in time of war.

Membership of *asafo* is derived from the male parent and succession to office is through the male as opposed to the "*ebusua*" or clan system. Every Effutu belongs to either the Dentsin or Tuafo *asafo* of the state.

Asafo functions in a number of ways: political, military,² social and religious. As a political unit of the society it maintains its right to enstool and destool a chief. In its social role, members of the institution organize themselves into search parties when a member is lost in the forest or drowned at sea; they also undertake communal labour to improve the community. They have been known to construct public places of convenience, schools, clinics, churches, buildings, recreation centres and other amenities.

The prime objective of *asafo* in the past was the defence of the society, of the aged, infirm and property. Among the Fantis and especially the Effutus this was the main objective thus it was the strong and the able-bodied of the society who actively participated in its deliberations. The institution was highly organized. Together with their officers, members of the institution all recognize the Omanhen³ as the ultimate power within the state.

Asafo tradition is also practised by other Akans, Gas and Ewes. But the institution is not so vigorously practised as it was done in the past, during the days of inter-tribal wars. In Ashanti *asafo* tradition has become virtually defunct as a result of its being suppressed by the British Government after the Ashanti expedition which led to the exile of Prempeh I, King of Ashanti, to the Seychelles Islands in 1900. The tradition has not been revived though its leaders are still recognized as important personalities; some of whom hold offices in the political system of Ashanti.⁴ However the tradition is still actively practised by coastal Akans, particularly the Effutu where it is regarded as a necessary part of the national life.

In Ashanti the institution may be classified into two main groups, namely, companies of the court and associations of the common people.⁵ The companies of the court are associated with stools and the lineage of the kings. The leaders of the divisions hold regular hereditary offices in the state and have stools as insignia of office. Accordingly there are chiefs or *ahenfo* who are known by various names or titles such as Akomforhene, Apentenene, Apesemakehene, Ankobeahene, Asonkohene, Apagyahene, and Apontihene. Traditionally they are recognized as leaders of the various divisions of the main *asafo* which are associated with towns and villages.

Among the Ashanti as well as Akim and Akwapim we find that the various divisions of asafo are attached to towns and placed under chiefs of those towns who themselves are leaders of the wider warrior set-up in the state such as the vanguard, rearguard, the left and right wings. In Akwapim state the various divisions are associated with the various towns. Thus there are in Amanokrom the Atwima and Kyirimim divisions, at Akropong we find Asonko and Apesemaka; there is the Akomfore division at Abiriw and Larteh while Apagya division is found at Aburi. In Akim Kotoku, the two asafo divisions of Akomfore and Aponti are found at Oda and Nkwanta respectively.

The set up is rather different among the coastal Akans. Among these Akans one finds in towns and villages two or more companies of asafo. Thus there are in Winneba both the Dentsin and Tuafo asafo with their divisions. And in Cape Coast there are seven companies resident there.

In many of these towns asafo associations constitute themselves into definite territorial as well as social groupings which have made residence patterns strongly virilocal. Until recently, a man would not take up permanent residence outside the territory of his asafo. In these territories there are living quarters known as '*prama*'. A prama may consist of a rectangular compound house with a court in the centre with usually one entrance.

The prama is shared by a group of males who on account of a common genealogical ancestry, and working together in one fishing boat find it convenient to live together, mend their fishing nets together and enjoy games together. But not all people living in a prama answer to the same genealogical relationships; the essential ingredient is that they all belong to the same asafo. An oldest person in this community becomes the head of the prama. Married adults have for themselves bedroom units and wives who live in special quarters known as '*Mbaa fie*', the female equivalent of the prama, bring food to their husbands and occasionally spend the night with their husbands when the latter do not go to sea. When the occupant of a bedroom unit dies the eldest son takes over his room; if there is no son the room may go to a brother's son but never to a sister's son.

It is the musical aspect of the institution that has inspired the research for this paper. It is my considered opinion that no meaningful study of the music of a people can be made without the study of the historical past, politics and the cultural background of that people. The study can be approached from an interdisciplinary perspective. This type of study may include, and endeavour to solve anthropological, historical, linguistic, and sociological problems. It is in this direction that the present study is intended to move.

The musical study of a people ought to be accompanied by a study of the culture of that people, for music involves culture and may be said to be culture bound. Such a study will provide an in depth understanding of the behaviour patterns of the people in music. The function of music in a society is a most fascinating subject and deserves thorough research.

Effutu asafo certainly has a significant function in the society. The role of their music is many fold. The song texts and drum texts serve as a source of inspiration to the society and may also refer to historical facts about the society. The value of asafo song text as an indicator of historical events cannot be disputed; but its value depends on the reliability of oral tradition.

The fundamental characteristics of this music are exceptionally tenacious and probably have survived unchanged for many centuries. This is not to suggest that this society has not been influenced from outside. It is in fact receptive to influence from other cultures. The essence of asafo music culture of the people is so strong that it either ingests new ideas or that it inculcated the new ideas with its own ethos. Thus asafo music can be said to belong to a class of its own.

The influence of Akan asafo tradition on outside societies has been so strong that its texts are still sung in the Fante⁶ language. The Ga and Ewe societies of Ghana still perform asafo music in the Fanti tradition. It may be suggested here that the Ga and Ewe derived their asafo tradition from the Effutu for various reasons; proximity, geographical as well as occupational. They all inhabit a continuous stretch along the coast. Occupationally they are principally fishermen and farmers.⁷

One can discuss asafo music in terms of the voice, musical instruments and sound. The musical instruments used in asafo are accorded certain degree of reverence by its users and the whole society almost to the point of worship. The drums are personified and there are certain rituals performed for them on prescribed days.

Certain assumptions characterize this study. When a section of a society leaves its cultural environment, that section tends to preserve its religious cult with its attendant music and musical instruments necessary for the worship of the cult. Language may be lost in the process but music cannot be lost so easily. Conversely, in an acculturative situation borrowed culture may retain its language as well as its practices and will not be affected by the language of its new environment.

This discourse: Effutu asafo music is an attempt to present a musicological study of a musical style of the Effutu of Ghana. These people belong to Akan, the largest linguistic group in Ghana. They live along the Ghana littoral between Apam and Senya Beraku. Winneba is the administrative headquarters of the district and is situated about 41 miles west of Accra, the capital of Ghana.

2. Asafo Song Text

One approach to the study of culture history of a given society consists of a description of that culture at any given point in time. The sources drawn upon in a study of this sort may include music, oral tradition, linguistics, archaeology, the analysis of ethnographic distribution, and visual art.

In using any one particular tool for the reconstruction of culture history, the question arises as to whether there is anything unique about this tool that renders it particularly useful. In considering music as a tool, it is desirable to consider not only the sound aspect of it, but also the textual as well as instrumental aspects too.

Song texts are considered by many as a useful tool for reconstructing culture history. Waterman and Bascom⁸ have commented on the use of topical songs in Africa.

The topical songs have been known to persist for generations when they commemorate some historic event or when they treat with some incident of some lasting interest. Thus songs referring to battles of the 18th century are still current in Nigeria, much as calypsos were composed in Trinidad deriding certain slave overseers.

Melville Herskovits⁹ has noted the role of the cantor as a keeper of records in Dahomey:

Songs were and are the prime carriers of history among the non-literate folk. In recounting the ritual associated with the growing of offerings to the souls of those who were transported into slavery, this function of song came out with great clarity. The informant at one point could not recall the sequence of important names in the series he was giving. Under his breath, to the accompaniment of clicking finger-nails, he began to sing, continuing his song for moments. When he stopped he had the names clearly in mind once more, and in explanation of his song stated that this was the Dahomean method of remembering historic facts. The role of the singer as the "keeper of records" has been marked by those who visited the kingdom in the days of its autonomy.

Many of the song texts of asafo make reference to particular incidents in the history of the society. Some of them refer to wars and civil disorders while others refer to incidents such as brave deeds and history of the company itself. Even those song texts labelled as "derogatory" tell of certain factual evidence of the misdeeds of individuals in the society.

Any society which maintains a hunters' or fishermen's tradition will have songs which recall certain activities of those associations. Similarly asafo, a warrior association has songs that recall past experiences of their ancestors. Such traditions serve as sources of history.

Asafo song texts are a form of oral tradition whose validity cannot be disputed, because they are a common experience of the entire society which have been handed down through generations. Most asafo songs have historical significance. One such song recalls the invasion of Winneba:

Those without ammunition
Equip yourselves now
For there is war today.
Safohen Kodwo Bortsi,
Safohen Ansah, there is war
We are capable of repelling Ashantis
We shall fight without help.

There are praise songs that tell of the bravery of war captains and the good deeds of individuals. After the Ashanti invasion a song was composed to commemorate the successful campaign led by Safohen Tetteh Gyankuma who was awarded a chiefship by the Paramount Chief.

Gyankuma, Tetteh Gyankuma,
Which man surpasses your highness?
We congratulate you, brave one.
The brave men of the land took up arms
And chased the wicked across the fields
They ran, they ran to their deaths.

The incident of 1885 in which both asafo companies of Winneba suffered casualties is recalled in two songs. The first recalls the pursuit of the Tuafo Asafo.

Open the doors
And let us in.
Open the doors
And let us in.
For the Tuafo are after us.

This is still sung to deride the members of Dentsin asafo.

The next song is sung by the Dentsin asafo expressing self pity and supposedly recalls the partisanship of King Gharthey. The King was a member of Tuafo asafo. The song text is as follows

We are the culprits
 Brothers, take care!
 Whatever goes wrong in this land
 They blame it on us.
 Brothers, take care!
 We are the culprits.

Subsequent to the incident of 1885 a number of arrests was made by the government. Some members of Dentsin asafo were charged with murder, tried in court and were found guilty and consequently executed accordingly. The song text therefore recalls this incident and it is used even now.

The text of these songs as well as many others have persisted for many generations and are used to commemorate historical events. They are functional in that they recall events of the past and serve as constant reminders of the great deeds of ancestors. The cantor in this case is said to be the 'keeper of state'. He possesses a thorough knowledge of the songs of his own asafo, and knows when and where to sing them.

3. Asafo Musicians

Effutus make distinction between different grades of musicians on the basis of skill, of knowledge, of repertoire and of leadership ability. Individual ability, skill and leadership are always given recognition.

The two main functional musicians in asafo are the cantor and the drummer. These are the most important musicians; without them (especially the cantor) no asafo performance would be perfect. Other musicians include the bell player, the rattle player and the bugler.¹⁰ These only play supporting roles.

i) The Cantor

In order to be acclaimed a cantor, one is expected to have good voice production, that is, that quality of voice which in the society is recognized as pleasant. A voice must be strong and heavy but not thin. A famous cantor, Kow Mbonyi maintains that a voice must be heard clearly and must also reach far. He underlines other criteria such as good ear and self discipline. A cantor he says, must not suffer from 'sweet ear'; this referring to lack of concentration which might prevent a cantor from maintaining correct tempo, tune and cue. A cantor who does not keep time properly, is said to have missed his step; and when he sings out of tune, he is said to have spoilt the song. Mbonyi further declares that it is necessary for a cantor to maintain correct pitch so as not to mislead the chorus.

The cantor should also be able to handle the texts of asafo songs with confidence; song texts are his stock in trade. The ability to compose extempore and to remember the verses of songs are his greatest assets. An asafo cantor must have a good knowledge of cuing and ability to improvise songs spontaneously with texts to ridicule a rival company. In order not to 'mix up words' he must have clarity of mind.

There is the tendency among cantors to get violently emotional. Their songs may incite members to action sometimes in an already explosive situation. Some cantors avoid excessive drinking; as one of them once said, he never sings when drunk. Excessive drinking among certain artists is interpreted as a desire to recollect past experiences. Many of the leading cantors declined offers of drinks at performances. Some would only drink after performances; others would not drink at all.¹¹

Abstinence from alcoholic drinks during performance is explained as a move to prevent embarrassing situations to their associations. They have never been violently emotional outside performances, and if they did during a performance situation, surely they would not blame it on alcoholic drinks.

ii) The Drummer

One of the essential roles in asafo music is played by the drummer. He is expected to possess a good knowledge of proverbs pertaining to asafo, knowledge of praise names of his reigning Omanhen, ancestor kings, ancestor leaders of his asafo and the various divisions of his own asafo company as well as those of other companies too. He is recognized by society for his knowledge of drum text and proficiency on the drums in addition to the qualities mentioned above.

The drummer is considered as the 'spokesman' of his company. In entering another company's territory he would first announce his name which he associates with that of his company, greet the Omanhen and his elders and then ask to be permitted to pass through. He announces himself by means of drum language:

Before the Creator created things,
Before Bobor created things,
Eku Dente¹² has always been my name.

Traditionally during performance, the drummer wears a jumper, a pair of shorts and a loin cloth.¹³ On appointment as a drummer, his asafo provides him with a silk cloth and a sum of money to the value of about twenty-seven shillings.¹⁴

The spirit of the whole asafo company is believed to be contained in the drum, and in consequence the drummer is expected to behave in a serene manner. He must carefully observe all the taboos connected with this instrument and must not neglect the rituals during performance because he is regarded as sacred and therefore accorded total immunity from any legal action. He may not carry his drums on his head; the belief here is that he will become insane if he did.

iii) Other Musicians

Mention should be made of the other musicians who together with the drummers and the chorus make up the asafo ensemble. These are the percussion bell players, rattle players and bugler. Unlike the drummers these players do not require elaborate training.

Of the lot the percussion bell players have the more arduous role to play. Even though the player of the percussion bell does not require long period of study he must have a good sense of rhythm in order to be able to keep the time. His chief role is to provide the basic rhythm of the music known as the 'time line.'¹⁵

The rattle only provides sound effect none-the-less the player is accorded certain recognition.

4. Asafo as a Dance

Asafo music is meant to be danced to. The dance is characteristically masculine and acrobatic. Even though it is essentially a male dance women are permitted to participate in it. In the case of women the dancing is very graceful and takes after the *adenkum*, a characteristically female dance type.

Miming is a characteristic feature of this dance. A dancer may mime the defeat, the escape of the enemy or depict how the enemy's resources were wasted. He may also make certain movements to depict a story of the past, or like the cantor, dance to ridicule a member of the society who had committed a shameful act.

Several civil wars and disputes have come about on account of the behaviour of dancers. De Graft Johnson has observed that a lewd mode of dancing may suddenly turn a comedy into a tragedy.¹⁶ A dancer may resort to obscene movements if he intends to insult members of other companies.

Dancers are expected to behave courteously toward drummers, in the way they comport themselves and in the exercise of consideration for the drummers so as not to overtax their patience and endurance. If they are discourteous, the drummers could be rude to them.

A good dancer like a good musician can be admired by the spectators. A dancer may be joined in the ring by a spectator who may offer a gift of money to show admiration. The dance ring is open to all spectators who may wish to dance.

5. Musical Instruments

Associations which maintain musical traditions include in their ensemble musical instruments that are particularly suitable for their purpose. Those whose music is speech bound have instruments which imitate the speech patterns of their language.

In tone language areas such as Effutu, musical instruments have dual function: the first is musical and the second is communication. In communication situation, the instruments do possess certain tone qualities that will bring out distinctively the various levels of speech tones available in the language. Where a single instrument cannot be employed to achieve this, a pair of them may be employed.

Some musical instruments are exclusive to the institution, others are found in general usage in the country. Asafo employs membranophones, idiophones as well as aerophones as musical instruments. Many of the instruments, especially the drums, are held in very high esteem by their users and the society as a whole, because it is believed that the asafo drum contains the souls of the members of its company. As a result certain taboos and rituals are prescribed for the instruments. Additional decorations are carried on the instruments in the form of figures to enhance their value. The drum shell may be covered in a piece of white cloth.

The membranophones are represented by open drums of which each asafo association possesses three kinds. The idiophones are made up of the cog-wheel rattle and several types of bells. Aerophones consist of the bugle and whistles.

Each asafo association has its own combination of musical instruments. Some of these are strictly associated with one particular asafo and are used exclusively by them. Such instruments may not be duplicated by the other asafo just as in the use of flags; their exclusive use is recognized by the society. Any infringement may result in disputes between the companies. Such disputes have been known to have

resulted in grave disorders and civil wars in the society.

The instruments that are common to both companies are the drums, double bells and whistles. The cog-wheel rattle, bugle and the simple triple bell are associated with Tuafo asafo; the hand bell and the triple clapper bell on the other hand are associated with the Dentsin asafo.

i) Membranophones

Asafo drums are of the open type, that is single-headed and open at one end. Closed drums or double-headed drums are not used. The wood for the carving of the drum shells is commonly that of the *tweneboa* or *twenduro* tree.¹⁷ The texture and durability of the wood of the trees make them particularly suitable. They are not easily destroyed by white ants, borer beetles and other insects. Their resistance to weather is very great. This tree, a species of the West African cedar which is regarded as particularly powerful and malignant is believed to consist of a mixture of many kinds of wood found in other trees.

Asafo drums may be used in a number of ways: as a speech instrument and as a dance instrument. As a speech instrument, it is used to imitate speech; it is intended to be heard as language and not merely as signals. In this mode only one drum is employed. In the dance mode the drum is played in concert with other instruments. However, the two modes overlap considerably because even in the dance situation drum sounds are meant to imitate speech.

Basically there are two kinds of tonal patterns in asafo music: unital and bitonal. The unital pattern which is employed chiefly in the dance mode maintains single tone level. The bitonal pattern is used in the speech mode of drumming and maintains two tone levels.

In the dance mode the three drums are played together. One of these, usually that played by the most senior drummer, is used as the master drum; the remaining two drums play supporting roles. The master drum is played standing, with the drum hanging from the drummer's left shoulder; the other drums are played sitting. All the drums may also be played in a procession during parades. In this way the drums are all played hanging from the drummers' left shoulders. This is possible because the drums are very light and not bulky.

ii) Other Musical Instruments

Asafo as a musical organization employs a variety of musical instruments in addition to the drums. These instruments include bugles and whistles of the trumpet family, cog-rattles and percussion bells.

Apart from the percussion bells and the cog-rattles the rest (including the hand bell) are not indigenous instruments. They were added to the asafo ensemble only recently.

(a) The Bugle

As stated above this is one of the asafo musical instruments that are not native to the culture. It is the military type and has a cupped mouth-piece coupled to a coiled tube with a slow rate of flare terminating in a bell-shaped mouth. The length of its air column is fixed; placing a restriction on the number of notes it can produce. These notes are dependent upon the different resonant frequencies exhibited

by the air column.

The use of the bugle is restricted in that it is only played during full scale functions such as the deer hunt festival¹⁸ and is used exclusively by the Tuafo Asafo.

(b) The Cog-Rattle

The Cog-rattle is a scraped idiophone.¹⁹ The instrument consists of an axle, and a frame body which contains a tongue and a cog-wheel. The axle serves as the handle, and the tongue fixed in the frame body is free to turn on the handle. The cog-rattle is played by whirling; the tongue strikes the teeth of the wheel one after the other.

It may be used to support the bell by striking the initial beat of phrases. Otherwise it is used for sound effect.

Its origin is not known but it is believed to have reached the Effutus through interaction with some European sailors. It is associated with the craftsmen association of Tuafo asafo, notably, carpenters. Locally its name is *Kakradaa* after the sound it makes.

(c) The Hand-bell

The hand bell is also alien to the Effutus. It was adapted for use by the Dentsin asafo and is employed exclusively by them. The instrument is associated with a household whose head serves as its custodian, and also provides a player for it.

The shape of the bell is like an inverted cup with a flared mouth. It contains a clapper which actuates it. The clapper hangs loosely inside it and when the bell is rotated, the clapper strikes the bell at the lip producing a very complex fundamental frequency which is a function of the internal diameter, the thickness of the wall, and the density and moduli of the metal.

The bell consists of a crown to which a handle is fixed, a shoulder, waist, lip and a clapper.

(d) Bells

There are four types of traditional bells used in asafo. These include the single bell or *dawur*; the twin bell or *dawur-nta*; tri-bell or *dawur-sa*; and the clapper tri-bell also known as *dawur-sa*. These bells are all locally made.

The bell is conical in shape and consists of a crown to which a handle is attached, the shoulder, waist, lip, a clapper or stick beater. The instruments are made from sheet iron.

The twin bell consists of a pair of bells of different sizes; the smaller one being superimposed on the larger bell and welded at the handles. The interval between the bells varies from bell to bell. Sound is produced by striking the lip of the bell with a piece of stick.

The tri-bell consists of three bells of differing sizes joined together at the handles by a chain approximately 200 centimeters long. It is used only during full scale performances. The tri-bell is played by three men each holding one of the component bells. Sound is produced by means of striking the lip of the bell with a piece of stick. The players produce different rhythmic patterns.

The clapper tri-bell is similar to the tri-bell except that its bells are smaller. The bells are also joined together by a chain approximately 150cm long, and contain clappers hanging loosely inside by a chain welded to the crown. Sound is produced

by shaking the bells. It is also played by three men each playing one bell.

Bell patterns are text bound and may range from two to five note phrases. Several patterns exist and each may be identified with a particular music. Bell patterns are very often reinforced by hand-clapping, cog-rattle as well as the hand bell. Hand clapping may occur on the initial beat of the phrase or the bar as the case may be or may do a variation of the bell pattern. The rattle and the hand bell may also be played in the same way, or may mark the beginning of phrases.²⁰

The twin bell may play the same bell patterns or phrases of the single bell but with occasional up beats on the lower bell. Variations of these patterns are possible especially when they are not text bound.



A typical bell pattern played on the Twin-bell

The individual bells of the tri-bell can be played separately to accompany drums. At the more elaborate ceremonies including processions the three bells of the tri-bell may be heard together.



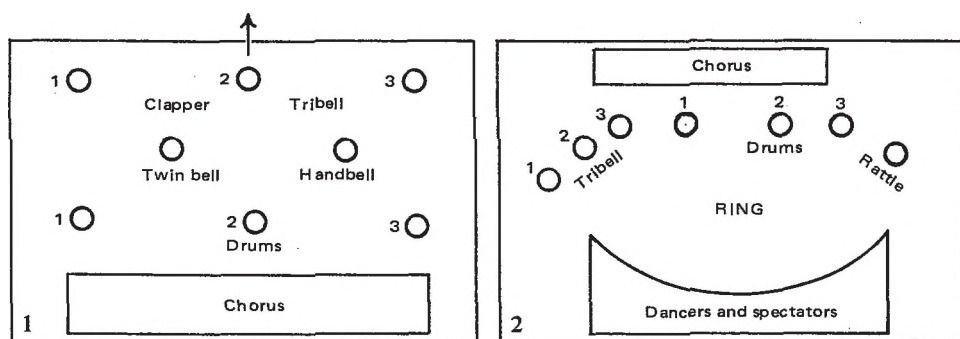
(Integrated patterns of the Tri-bell).

Invariably the master drummer may tap the correct bell pattern for the music if he finds the bell players are unable to play accurately.

6. Processional Arrangement

Asafo may proceed in a procession during the funeral of a chief or a prominent office bearer such as a War Captain, Supi or a Tufuhene or during an important festival such as the hunt festival. During processions the orchestra is led by the players of the clapper tri-bell. The rest of the orchestra follows in this order; the players of the twin bell and the hand-bell walk in a row and followed by the three drummers. The chorus led by the cantor follows the orchestra. A person may do a dance even during the procession. This takes place ahead of the orchestra. This is the arrangement usually followed by the Dentsin asafo.

In the case of the Tuafo asafo the order is the same except that the cog-rattle player takes the place of the hand bell player.



Typical arrangements of Dentsin Asafo orchestra and chorus, 1: processional, 2: seating.

7. Seating Arrangement

Funeral celebrations as well as durbars provide the setting for asafo musical performance. In all these cases the seating of the orchestra is done in a semi circle. Dancers and spectators also seat themselves in a semicircle facing the orchestra. The circular space created by this arrangement is commonly termed the 'dance ring'. The chorus and other members of the asafo take their seat behind the orchestra.

Asafo appears to be the one organization that tends to embrace the whole society. Every member is expected to participate in its deliberations. Loyalty to one's asafo company is very strong and surmounts all other ties. In all its activities music plays a very predominant role. Asafo music has a significant function in the organization. The song-texts as well as drum-texts serve as a source of inspiration to the society and also recall historical events of the society. Thus asafo music can be said to belong to a class of its own.

NOTES

- 1 According to J.H. Nketia *asafo* derives from *Kwasafu*, meaning 'commoners'. John Mensah-Sarbah maintains that the word derives from *nsafo* meaning friends. I believe the word can be translated as 'warrior' deriving from *sa* which translates as 'war', thus people engaging in warfare are called *asafo*. Various morphemes may be added to the root to create meanings related to it, as in *asafo mu* and *asafomba*; these words mean 'in the manner of' and 'membership of' *asafo* respectively.
- 2 The military function of *asafo* no longer prevails in the modern political system of Ghana. Inter-tribal wars have ceased, and the defence of society lies with the Army.
- 3 This literally means King of the State. *Oman* is the State and the suffix *-hen* is 'King' or Chief. Ordinarily such a ruler is referred to as 'Paramount Chief'.
- 4 Busia 1949.
- 5 Nketia 1963.
- 6 Fante is a dialect of the Akan language which is spoken by those Akans who live in the south and along the coast of Ghana. They live in a continuous stretch from Accra to the western border of the country. A few of the societies are bilingual.
- 7 Most of the people are migrant fishermen.
- 8 D. Waterman and Bascom, "African and New World Folklore", in Maria Leach (Ed.), *Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, pp. 18-24.
- 9 Herskovits 1967, 321.
- 10 This instrument is a foreign addition and is believed to have been presented to Tuafo asafo by a governor of Fort Winneba.
- 11 During an interview session, Kow Mbonyi, a cantor and Kweku Tekyi, a drummer, refused alcoholic drinks but instead they asked for tea. A third musician, Kwesi Kodwo also a cantor sipped a little alcohol. They all reported that they needed clarity of mind to enable them to do a good and clean piece of work.
- 12 Eku Dente is the cognomen of the Kyeremu company of the Tuafo asafo. Other cognomens of Akomfor and Apagya, are Ekumfiako and Noblemen respectively. Ekumfiako literally means 'we did not fight the people of Ekumfi', Fantis in the Central Region, probably because they were allies.
- 13 Johnson 1932.
- 14 In real value the money is worth about Twelve dollars or more.

- 15 Time line is a rhythmic pattern which serves as point of reference for instrumentalists. It is usually provided by the bell and other percussion instruments.
- 16 Johnson op. cit., 14.
- 17 The botanical name of this species is Entandrophragma. Christaller's description of the tree is, "the tree, the wood of which resembles cedar: cedar is used for house-building and for drums".
- 18 This is the major festival of the Effutu during which the two asafo companies compete for the catch of a live deer. It is celebrated in either April or May according to a native calendar calculation.
- 20 The cog-rattle and the hand-bell are not part of the asafo orchestra. They are associated with the craftsmen of the various asafo companies and so are played during elaborate celebrations.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO AFRICAN MUSIC

Contributions to this Journal from all sources are welcomed by the Editor. The following general themes may serve as a clue, but contributions, in English or French, on all aspects of African music and arts are considered. Please write to:

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